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<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/cae>

**MERCED MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO
TRANSPORTING AND POSSESSING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**

FRESNO - United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that RICHARD SANCHEZ, of Merced, California pleaded guilty before the Honorable Lawrence J. O'Neill to one count of shipping or transporting visual depictions of the sexual exploitation of minors and one count of possessing visual depictions of the sexual exploitation of minors.

The case is the result of an investigation by the United States Postal Inspection Service offices in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and San Francisco, California, as part of Project Safe Childhood. PSC is a United States Department of Justice initiative established to increase federal prosecutions of violent sexual predators of children, and to reduce the number of Internet crimes against children including child pornography trafficking. As a part of PSC, the United States Attorney's Office has teamed with state and local agencies and organizations to increase law enforcement presence on the Internet, and to educate the public about safe Internet use, thereby reducing the risk that children might fall prey to online sexual predators. For additional information on the PSC initiative, please go to www.projectsafefchildhood.gov or call the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of California and ask to speak with the PSC coordinator.

According to Assistant United States Attorney David Gappa, who is prosecuting the case, SANCHEZ was online in a Yahoo! group when he responded to a posting related to the exchange of videos of young teens. Through subsequent communications with an undercover law enforcement officer, the defendant agreed to ship a VHS tape containing child pornography to Pennsylvania. The defendant then agreed to receive delivery of a DVD which he believed to contain child pornography. Two minutes after delivery of the package containing the DVD, a search warrant was executed at the defendant's residence, and the DVD was located in a DVD player in the defendant's bedroom.

SANCHEZ has agreed to a total prison sentence of 151 months (12 years 7 months) to be followed by 15 years of supervised release. He faces a maximum term of imprisonment of 20 years, a fine of up to \$250,000, and a potential lifetime term of supervised release when he is sentenced on October 12, 2007, for the transportation or shipping charge. He faces a maximum term of imprisonment of ten years, a fine of up to \$250,000, and a potential lifetime term of

supervised release for the possession charge. However, the actual sentence will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables, and any applicable statutory sentencing factors.

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